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Padlet

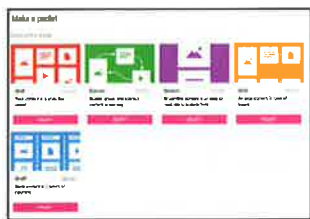
Sharing Content

<https://padlet.com>

What is it?

Padlet is a simple tool for sharing content in what might simply be described as an online noticeboard. Using Padlet, you are able to create webpages (or individual Padlets) and populate them with what look like virtual sticky-notes which can include just text, or richer content like links to websites or embedded videos, as well as your own files/documents or images. There are school and corporate Padlet plans, but the basic version is free and all you need to sign up for an account is an email address, or use your Google or Facebook account.

What features does it have?



When you start the process of creating a Padlet, you can first choose the type of layout you want to use. This is a new feature which helps you to structure and organise the content of your Padlet, and create a board that suits your

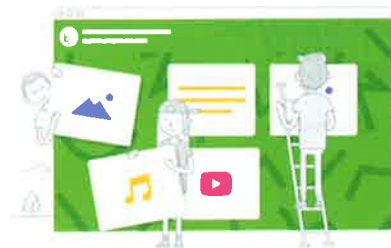
needs. Your Padlet is then generated and you can begin to customise the look, settings and other features.

In terms of how your Padlet looks, there is a large variety of wallpapers you can choose from, as well as the option to upload your own. This will help you to create something that suits the function of your Padlet, and customise the look of it to make it individual.

Another setting that is useful is the option to allow or restrict comments and 'reactions'. If you want to encourage students to engage with the content, and one another, then you can set each board to either allow or deny the addition of comments. Alternatively, you can allow reactions, which include different forms of ratings which you can choose to be available, so that students can rate or react to individual content on the Padlet. These options are a great feature for facilitating engagement with the content. Any of these options can be changed and updated via the 'modify' menu, at any time.

Other features worth knowing about are the sharing and exporting options. You can control the privacy levels of each individual Padlet you create, of which there are four options of access, and this is particularly useful if you are adding your own files/content that you don't want to be publicly available or you want students to contribute to the content and interact with one another. There is also the option for switching on moderation in this menu, so that any posts from contributors have to be approved.

Finally, sharing and exporting is fairly powerful with Padlet. You have the ability to fully embed your creations with html code, give your Padlet a partly-customised URL which can be easily shared, or export the content itself in a variety of file formats. All of these options mean that your work can be re-used and re-purposed in new formats.



What could I use it for?

I think that Padlet has lots of potential for use in schools and libraries. It lends itself to being a tool for collating and sharing sources for curriculum support, on topics for specific projects and subjects to support teaching and learning. So, whether it is year 7 homework on climate change or year 11 revision for English set-texts, you can easily put together a range of websites and other online content to support students and staff. If you're working with a class or group on a specific book, you can create a Padlet that complements the reading, with extra materials that support and extend the activities.

Also, using it for setting tasks which involve students contributing their responses is simple, and so Padlet as a tool for collaboration would be a natural fit in school libraries. A practical example is that you could set your book group some reading before your next meeting, and encourage them to post their responses to what they read before the next time

you get together. Or, when running a research session with a group, students could post good sources that they find on a Padlet to share with the class, with an explanation as to why they found it helpful. This is then available post-session for them to revisit, and add further links to, in the future.

In the past, I have used it to share a bibliography with a class of students and, in groups, for them to add comments about each of the sources that were included. This task was to demonstrate being able to identify the type of source from the reference, and an understanding of what does and/or does not make a source suitable for an academic essay. Another use was to set students the task of brainstorming keywords on a topic, using an image as the stimulus, and adding their ideas to a Padlet board. This allowed the class to collect all of their ideas, which they can then refer back to when doing their research, and you can see an example at <https://tinyurl.com/y8twrmls>.

Summary

Padlet is a simple tool to use, with the right amount of strong features for making it a valuable addition to Librarians' online toolkit. To see an example of how you might use Padlet, you can go to <https://tinyurl.com/y7zpun4s>.

John Iona, Subject Liaison Librarian: Psychology, The Sheppard Library, Middlesex University



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